

a member of this Board. As between a brilliant Controller and a Controller not so brilliant but with the experience, I am inclined to the view that the man with the experience can render more efficient service to the ratepayers in the vast majority of cases.

One writer has intimated that the Board of Control may be the means of developing the Commission system, and he states:

1. That the people should be educated to realize that municipal government is a profession, not a business;
2. That it is a difficult profession, requiring special preparation;
3. That a man should devote his life to it.

There may be considerable truth in such a statement, but it seems to me that you must preserve the link between the ratepayer and the administrative office of the corporation, and this can only be done satisfactorily by an elective board. The Board of Control is the cabinet which is responsible to the people, and as such must keep in touch with the needs and requirements of its constituents. The official end of it, so far as the technical training is concerned, can have an equivalent result by the appointment of heads of departments trained in municipal matters.

The Commission form of government that has been reported such a success on the other side of the line is due, I think, as near as I can size up the situation, to two things: 1, a great public awakening to the importance of proper municipal administration amongst ratepayers; 2, the abolition of a number of elective offices, and the more or less separation of national politics from municipal politics. I am not such a firm believer in form as I am in men, and even with the general power vested in the municipalities to appoint all the head officers of the municipalities, there can, I am inclined to think, be evolved by by-laws, even under the present municipal system in Canada, a city administration under the control of a general manager appointed by the council. While the mayor is the legal head of the corporation, there are scarcely any men who have the time to devote to the detailed management and administration of corporation's affairs, involving as they now do, such a wide range of subjects; but there is nothing to prevent the creation of a general manager who would have supervision over the entire detailed administration of the municipal affairs, responsible, say, to the mayor, Board of Control, or the Council direct.

The Commission form of government that is in vogue in Edmonton is of a type that would seem to indicate that there are three managers performing this work. It is not, in a strict sense, Commission government at all. The same results may be accomplished through the payment of large salaries for efficient administrative heads of departments.

The City of Westmount has appointed a General Manager who is intended to manage the city's business as any man in like office would manage the affairs of a large private corporation.

Some cities strive for an ideal by appointing commissioners, which is really not the Commission form of government, but merely the appointment of highly paid officials to the responsible supervision of several departments. Even where commissioners sit with the mayor as an administrative body, yet in the council they have no right to vote. The same result is attained

by the appointment of efficient heads of departments who will be directly responsible to the Board of Control and Council, as in the case of the majority of the larger cities in Canada.

Another development in municipal administration is the appointment by the provincial authorities of a Commission to control public utilities and supervise certain municipal works. Such commissions are found in the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. This is government by appointed officers. The efficiency of this class of supervision over municipal affairs depends upon two things: 1, the amplitude of the powers conferred by the act creating the commission; 2, the efficiency and the progressiveness of the member or members appointed to the commission.

There is no doubt in my mind but that the public dissatisfaction with some of such boards has been due, to a large extent, (1), to the limited powers conferred upon the Commission by the legislature, and (2), to the lack of breadth of the members of the Commission, who did not reflect the progress of this rapidly moving age. Commissions must be less technically legal and more ideally just. Such a commission to be successful under the second heading, must have men appointed to it who are determined to see that the public get what is coming to them in the way of rates and services, irrespective of foul legislation which has been lobbied through the legislature of the Province or Parliament. Even with poor legislation, an aggressive Commission can do a very great deal to alleviate the troubles of the public, but nothing to my mind cripples or interferes with efficient municipal administration so much as the interference of outside influences and special interests.

One city has adopted the Commission form of government in vogue in Des Moines, but even that form, which has taken such a hold on the American side of the line, is liable to fail unless there is a good, active, healthy public sentiment amongst the ratepayers. Eternal vigilance alone is the price of good government, municipal or otherwise.

In Manitoba a public utility commissioner has been appointed, the act having been passed in 1912. The Commissioner's powers are very wide, even going to the extent of modifying franchise contracts if a utility corporation does not administer its affairs in such a manner as to properly serve the public. In one particular alone the work of this commission has been important; the unsightly poles and wires which are strung all over the city, in many cases duplicating lines, will, under the order of this commission be more or less eliminated; instead of dual sets of poles, one set will serve both the city's distribution system and that of the rival companies.

A further element of administration is the creation of the Dominion Railway Board, which has charge and supervision of all the Dominion railways of Canada. It has also a number of other public services. This board also has done very effective work, but its jurisdiction is so wide and the territory it covers so great that I often think municipal interests have not had as much attention as they might have. This Board could, by the supervision of agreements between corporations and municipalities, prevent many injustices that are burdening the latter. I often think they are remiss in their duty to the public when they stand aside and allow a municipality and a railway to make a bargain manifestly unfair to the former. Most municipalities have been easy marks for the railways.